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Processing of all three shuttles under way for future missions

NASA, DOD partner to manage aeronautical test facilities

◆ **Shuttle Update:** Last week, the STS-117 payload was installed into **Atlantis'** cargo bay. In addition, technicians continued their preparations for the hypergolic propellant load, scheduled for this week. Shuttle interface testing and validation testing of launch pad systems are also under way.

Endeavour remains in Orbiter Processing Facility bay 2, and technicians continue preparing the vehicle for its first launch in more than four years, mission STS-118. Last week, technicians completed preparations for the mating of the aft orbital maneuvering system pod to the reaction control system. Final mate and interface verification was scheduled for the weekend. Work is also under way to prepare the orbiter for installation of the orbiter boom sensor system, which is a robotic arm extension. Final testing of the orbiter's fuel cells was completed last week.

Processing of **Discovery**, which returned from the STS-116 mission on Dec. 22, continues in Orbiter Processing Facility bay 3. The right-hand orbital maneuvering system pod was removed last week. Technicians are busy working on Discovery's electrical system, preparing for the installation of the new station-to-shuttle power transfer system modification. This system will allow the orbiter and International Space Station to share power, which will enable the orbiter to remain docked for longer

periods of time. Work is also under way to change out Discovery's cockpit windows, with the removal and replacement of window No. 8 completed last week.

◆ **NASA Update:** NASA and the Department of Defense recently signed an agreement to develop an integrated national strategy for managing their respective aeronautical test facilities. NASA Administrator Michael Griffin and Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Kenneth Krieg signed the National Partnership for Aeronautical Testing agreement.

The agreement expands the dialogue beyond the test and evaluation communities to include industry, academia and the science and technology interests from both agencies. Aeronautical test facilities are used for testing vehicles (e.g., aircraft, missiles or space vehicles) or for related scientific and engineering studies. They include wind tunnels, propulsion test facilities, simulation facilities and open-air ranges.

■ **Administrative Professionals To Meet** — The Central Brevard Chapter of the International Association of Administrative Professionals invites all administrative support personnel to its monthly meeting at 5:30 p.m. March 13 at the Courtyard by Marriott on 3425 N. Atlantic Avenue in Cocoa Beach. Kimmarie Barrett, with the Lockheed Martin Informa-

tion and Technology Division, will speak about "Getting Rid of E-mail Clutter." Guests are welcome. The optional dinner costs \$11. Please RSVP by March 12 to Debbie Carter at dcarter@hoyman.com or 321-426-3003. Reservations can also be made through the chapter Web site at iaapcentralbrevard.homestead.com. Regular chapter meetings are the second Tuesday of each month.

■ **NASA College Scholarship Fund Inc.** — This non-profit organization awards undergraduate scholarships to qualified NASA dependents pursuing a course of study in science or engineering fields. Up to six scholarships will be awarded this year. Information on the guidelines for applying for the scholarship can be found at:

<http://nasapeople.nasa.gov/nasascholarship/index.htm>. Applications are now being accepted and must be received by the corporation scholarship committee at Johnson Space Center no later than March 20. For additional details, please contact Debbie Bitner at 867-0510 or Deborah.L.Bitner@nasa.gov.

■ **Did You Know?** NASA has issued a request for proposal for the Ares I launch vehicle upper-stage element that will transport the Orion crew exploration vehicle and its crew and cargo to low-Earth orbit. The upper-stage proposals are due to Marshall Space Flight Center no later than 2 p.m. April 13.